

City of Auburn, Maine

"Maine's City of Opportunity"

Conservation Commission

PARKS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 30, 2015 – Auburn Hall

Auburn's Conservation Commission Parks Subcommittee met on Wednesday, December 30, 2015.

Co-Chair Bob Sipe brought the meeting to order at 6:38 pm. Members present were: Bob Sipe, Chuck Lafean, Larry Pelletier, Misty Edgecomb, Leroy Walker, and Tizz Crowley.

Minutes

ACTION: Leroy Walker seconded by Larry Pelletier moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

Go Fund Me Page For Civic Project

Bob Sipe sent the web link to the Committee for information.

Mt. Apatite Update and Plan

Chuck Lafean said Busytown Bikes in Lewiston supports a lot of the mountain bikers so before he tried to raise \$500-\$600 for way finding signage inside Mt. Apatite and 2 kiosk signs for the Small Road and Garfield Road entrances he thought he might reach out to them if there are no objections to having commercially sponsored signage. Tizz Crowley said the Parks Subcommittee probably would not have that authority and suggested he write a summary to the Conservation Commission and copy the City Manager asking them if there are any rules. Leroy Walker suggested he include Police Chief Crowell as well because he has thoughts on signs too. He said that there are hundreds of miscellaneous signs for Mt. Apatite at the old Parks Garage they have had 5 years+/- that have never been placed. Leroy had a sample sign of the rules. Misty Edgecomb will meet with Leroy at the Parks Department to see and take pictures of the signs available to send to the rest of the Committee. Signs the Land Trust is mostly interested in are maps with history of area for kiosks and trail junction signage.

Stakeholders of Mt. Apatite include: Police Chief, Snow Gypsies Snowmobile Club, Dan Goyette, Director of Public Services, and Androscoggin Land Trust. There was discussion about The Androscoggin Land Trust possibly having an agreement with the City to be the stewards. They will find out from the City Manager. Concern was expressed about all the stakeholders involved and making sure they are not all pulling in different directions and finding out what their discussion and concerns are and then decide what direction to go. It was suggested that Dan Goyette come in to talk about the trail grant he is working on and what his visions are. Tizz Crowley will go back to the Council minutes to confirm there is a trail grant specifically for Mt. Apatite. Leroy Walker suggested someone contact Doug Beck in Augusta that he was the last

mastermind in trying to develop Mt. Apatite, and he can give them the information they are looking for.

NEXT STEPS:

- ❖ Write a summary to the Conservation Commission with a copy to the City Manager and Police Chief asking if there are any rules about getting commercial sponsorship
- ❖ Misty and Leroy will make arrangements to meet at the Parks Department to take pictures of the signs to forward to the Committee
- ❖ Find out from the City Manager if the Androscoggin Land Trust has an agreement with the City to be stewards of Mt. Apatite
- ❖ Email Doug Beck in Augusta for any information he has about Mt. Apatite
- ❖ Tizz Crowley will go back to last City Council meeting to confirm Mt Apatite was included in the trails grant
- ❖ Have Dan Goyette come in and talk about the grant and what his visions are

Dog Park

Misty Edgecomb did a Face book poll to find out what people are looking for in a dog park.

Recommendations were:

- A big space for the dogs to run to get some energy out (bigger than Lewiston)
- Separation between small dogs and large dogs and making sure the little dogs are protected in some sort of area
- Awareness of safety and prevention of disease transmission i.e. no standing
- water, baggies for dog messes and trash receptacles
- Someplace on the outskirts of town rather than downtown
- Obstacle course for dogs to help with exercise, training, and agility
- Shade & picnic areas
- Access to water for drinking
- Bathroom facilities

Misty likes the idea of going to a park that happens to be dog friendly and having a space for dogs to run but access to trails so people can take walks/hike and spend the day.

Suggested Locations include:

- Cleveland Field
- Grassy area near Community Little Theater
- The Outlet in East Auburn
- Hills Trail across the street from Park Avenue Elementary School

Misty was concerned about some of them being existing parks and does not want to take someone's favorite existing park, turn it into a dog park, and take away their favorite spot. She also is not in favor of a dog park near schools.

The Committee suggested:

- Property off Hotel Road owned by Lewiston/Auburn Railroad Co – Maybe tie it in to use the triangle of land along the river to put in a boat launch site. There are existing trails already. They would need to find a way to get on the other side of the tracks.
- Backside of Lakeview - It is very long, quite wide, some of it is fenced, has playground equipment, athletic facilities, can get water easily, not a lot of shade but maybe could take some trees and create shade, space for a few picnic tables, and some limited parking. Leroy Walker noted he is not sure of danger or rules because it is filled land.
- Turner/Auburn line rest stop owned by MDOT - It has parking and is fenced in. It would be good for a small dog park. The trails go all the way to Tot Lot.
- Water District Land - Leroy Walker suggested someone talk to the Water District and see what they own for land and if they could work with the Committee for a dog park. Tizz Crowley reminded them it is a watershed and there could possibly be some issues i.e. piles of dog messes and concentration of people.
- Area adjacent to Moulton - Possibly for small dogs in town.

Leroy Walker has information from research he has done on dog parks years ago. He will get the information to Misty Edgecomb and the rest of the committee. He said he worked on it for months but couldn't get any funding or anyone to direct it and run with it.

The Committee discussed how they would fund a Dog Park. Commercial sponsorship was suggested from Dog Daycares, Petco etc. Tizz Crowley said the City is starting the budget process and now is the time to ask. They probably would not get municipal funding but there are other opportunities that could come out of it i.e. grants. She said if we are looking at ways to sell an increase in a tax rate there ought to be some things in there for residents for quality of life and neighborhood. It was suggested to use funding that is currently used for flowers on the median's, put in wild flowers instead, and use the money for something that is going to be actively used by residents of Auburn. They also discussed using volunteers such as convicts.

NEXT STEPS:

- ❖ Leroy Walker will get the information he has from when he researched dog parks to Misty
- ❖ Recommend using funding that is currently used to put in and maintain flowers on the median's, put in wild flowers instead that do not require maintenance, and use the money for something that is going to be actively used by residents of Auburn like a dog park instead of something passive. All agreed they are all for beautification but if they have a choice between a beautiful median or dog park they would rather see the dog park.
- ❖ Find out what the policy and practice of the city is for corporate sponsorship and maintenance and if there is a procedure for the Committee to go through
- ❖ Update the Conservation Commission

- ❖ Misty Edgecomb will continue to work on finding a location for the dog park, rules on building a dog park, and update the information she has to share with others

City Website, Parks Information

Leroy Walker sent the web site recommendations to the City Manager so he was not left out of the picture and because he thought there were some good ideas. The City Manager agreed with everything and wants to use what was recommended but wants the Committee to use department titles instead of names. The City Manager is waiting for the Chair to send him a package with recommendations of what would be helpful to residents.

Tizz Crowley noted a recommendation should be that the City needs to be consistent on the website with the Parks Department and Recreation Department. There was a lot of discussion regarding The Recreation and Parks Departments, their boards, whether they should be separate or joint, and what is in the ordinance.

There was discussion regarding the discrepancy in park names on page 3 i.e. Lake Grove Park Beach vs. Municipal Outlet Beach. They discussed recommending a name to use. Tizz Crowley said she would like to save the naming process and start with recommending Lake Grove Park Beach. She suggested getting the naming procedure and policy to see what they need to do to get that started. ACTION: Tizz Crowley seconded by Misty Edgecomb moved to match up the names correctly on both web sites and name it Lake Grove Park & Beach. All approved.

The Little Androscoggin Park is the official name for the Little Androscoggin; they call it the Little Andy Park as an abbreviation. Mt. Apatite should be Mt. not Mount, and Cleveland Field is Cleveland Field Park. Tizz Crowley will get the naming policy and procedure. It was suggested to submit the proper names at the same time so it will easily slide through.

ACTION: Motion by Leroy Walker seconded by Bob Sipe moved that all city documentation especially the website be consistent in the naming of the Parks. The Parks correct names are: Lake Grove Park & Beach, The Little Androscoggin Park, Mt. Apatite Park with Mt., and Cleveland Field and that where there are references to these locations that are different from what we just described with be corrected. All approved.

ACTION: Bob Sipe seconded by Chuck Lafean made a motion to replace “Visitors” on the web site to: Things to do places to see. Motion unanimously approved.

Bob Sipe recommended getting a group from Bates College who are studying computer technology, website design, or marketing look at the website and make a recommendation.

Bob Sipe will make changes to their website recommendations and will forward to everyone including the City Manager. Tizz Crowley said it can be part of their next report to the Conservation Commission the third Tuesday of January. Bob Sipe will put together a summary.

Playground Design Class at CMCC

Misty Edgecomb has a meeting with Dan Mareno, the Department Chair for the Architectural and Civil Engineering Technology Program at CMMC, on Monday. She said the Professors have free range to teach what they want in their classes but he can make suggestions on things.

He wants it to be worded really well and concisely so they have a really good chance of bidding it out. They have other projects that the City wants the college to work on as well so hopefully they will consider the playground project.

Misty spoke to Billy Hunter about the land next to the Lake Street School. It is still own by the School Department and under their control, they have no plans for it, and they are interested in this project. She said that there are kids still going to school there and a whole neighborhood without a playground. The project is just a playground right now but the land is just sitting there and they talked about using it to incorporate a park. If the plan of an all inclusive park is developed and this space is recommended, there will need to be an agreement between the City and School Department.

Tizz Crowley emphasized and the Committee unanimously agreed that they are talking about a lot of variety of projects and places creating a lot of excitement but they recognize it is not all going to be done in the next 60 days or year and before it comes to the next step they will have looked at the financial sides of these projects before they move forward.

Adjourn

ACTION: Leroy Walker seconded by Bob Sipe moved to adjourn at 8:33 pm. The motion was approved.

Submitted by:
Tammy Thatcher